HARAMBEE FLAME

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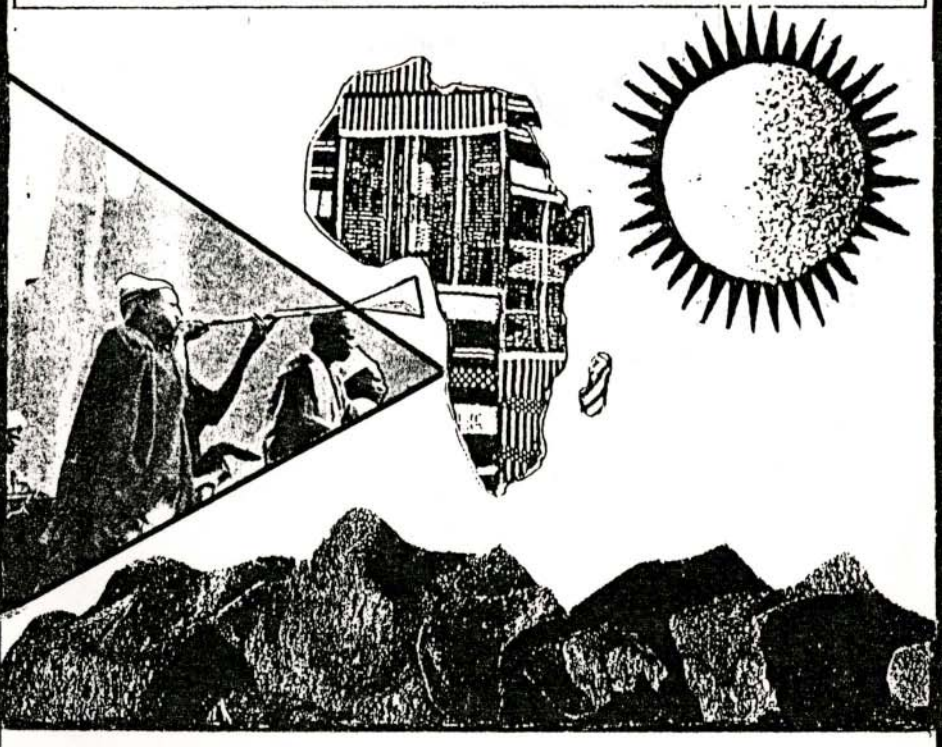

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HARAMBEE AFRIKAN CULTURAL ORGANIZATION
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HARAMBEE AFRIKAN CULTURAL ORGANIZATION CREED

Together we seek to know that which is us, to expand our collective consciousness of who we are and whence we come. We exalt in the fact that Afrikans are beautiful in our own right rather than at the expense of any other ethnic group. And in the true spirit of the Swahili word, "harambee," we promote the idea that cultural awareness is germane to human growth.

Commentary

On the 16th. of December, 1995, 15-year-old Joseph Knudsen and 23-year-old Hosie Ealy were shot by a Kwik Shop clerk in Omaha. Knudsen, an indigenous(Native American) youth was killed, while Ealy, an African, received wounds to the arm and leg. The store clerk, David Johnson, a European(Caucasian), was arrested and charged with second-degree murder. He has been released on $20,000 bail--$2,000 in actual cash.

Reportedly, Knudsen and Ealy had run out of the Kwik Shop with four 12-packs of beer. Johnson followed and shot them outside the store. Since the shooting, Johnson; Alex Kasady, the store owner; and Hal Daub, the mayor of Omaha have made statements to the effect that, while the death may have been tragic, Knudsen got what was coming to him as a law-breaker. Apparently, this view is shared by a large portion of Omaha's European population, as evidenced by opinion samplings offered by t.v. news and radio call-ins, as well as by offers of money for Johnson's legal defense. It should be pointed out also that Douglas County Court judge Sam Cooper lowered Johnson's bail from an original $30,000 to $20,000. On the same day, and prior to the action taken on Johnson, Cooper set a $25,000 bail on a **burglary** suspect and a $75,000 bail on a person charged with first-degree **assault.**

What does all this say about the value, as far as many Europeans in Omaha(and elsewhere) are concerned, of an indigenous person or an African? Let's go back in time. It has been estimated that, at the time of Europeans' arrival in North America, there were anywhere from six to ten million indigenous people here, with their own organized societies, governments, etc. Yet by the end of the 19th. century, the population was down to around a quarter of a million. Through a combination of armed aggression, spreading of disease(some of this by design), forced relocations, destruction of buffalo and other food sources, etc., Europeans very nearly annihilated a people and they took over their homeland. During this process of genocide and theft against the Sioux, Iroquois, Apache,

and the other nations of indigenous people in this country, Europeans were importing and **breeding** Africans to do slave labor on the indigenous people's lands. Estimates range from fifty to two hundred million Africans lost their lives during the slave trade. And while indigenous people were being forced onto reservations, Africans were being kept as property on slave plantations and, later, forced into veritable "bantustans"(ghettos).

We return now to December of 1995. Two youths, one African and one indigenous, go into a European-owned store and leave with beer they've ripped off. A European clerk of the store runs outside with a pistol and guns the youth down. He feels justified. The store owner feels justified, the Europeans' mayor,... Cleo Walker, the father of the slain youth, is quoted in the OMAHA WORLD HERALD as stating, "When you have a gun, you feel superior, like a tough guy. You're going to show somebody something." There is truth in that statement. But the feeling of superiority that allowed Johnson to go trigger-happy on the two youths, while buttressed by the fact that he had a gun at hand, comes from the same source that enabled his foreparents to "discover 'America,'" "civilize" Africans, believe in their "manifest destiny" to rule the lives of indigenous people, Africans, and other "savages." It was the ideology of "European supremacy"("white"-skin privilege) that enabled Johnson, Kasady, Hal Daub, and others to view the death of Joseph Knudsen as nothing other than the fulfillment of the notion that "the only good injun(or nigger) is a dead injun."

None of this is to say that either Knudsen or Ealy were thinking of this history of Europeans' ideology of supremacy when they went into the Kwik Shop, though they may have seen the store as the property of the enemy. More than likely, they were simply thirsty for some brew and didn't have the money to pay for it. And this raises another question. Who introduced Knudsen's people to "fire water"? Who used and continues to use alcohol, heroin, crack, etc. as instruments of chemical warfare against this country's indigenous and African populations and against other people of color?

Even the names of David Johnson's victims speak to the legacy of European domination of indigenous and African people. "Joseph Knudsen"? "Hosie Ealy"? Not only did David Johnson's foreparents steal Knudsen's people's land and steal Ealy's people from their land but separated them from their names. When Johnson shot the two youths, he was simply disposing of "property" that was his as a European.

But the death of an indigenous youth and wounding of an African is not just a tale of negative ironies but of positive as well. Over the past couple of weeks, several African and indigenous persons have been picketing the Kwik Shop where the shooting took place. It is fitting that this is happening. We(Africans and indigenous people) have a common oppressor now, as we did when we fought together for around forty years against the U.S. government in the Seminole Wars, as we did when indigenous people were accepting into their communities Africans who had escaped from the slave plantations. This present act of solidarity provides us with an opportunity to renew the friendships and alliances that we held prior to the often successful efforts of Europeans to establish antagonisms between us, to buy us off, etc. It also provides us with an opportunity to relearn the traditional values that were common to our foreparents prior to the Americanization of so many of us.

May the spirit of Joseph Knudsen be at peace in the realm of his ancestors.

Editor

Note: As to tne paragraph at the top of this page, see visual aid on page 4.

Dean Smith

Andrea Michelle Smith

Katherine Graham

Greg Graham

VISUAL AID

Marvin D. "Swede" Johnson.

Johnson

Editorial Policy

The HARAMBEE FLAME is the monthly newsletter of the Harambee Afrikan Cultural Organization(Nebraska State Pen chapter). Ours is a pan-Africanist publication, meaning that we view all people of African descent as one African people, having certain basic interests in common. Also, the HARAMBEE FLAME attempts to be Africentric, in that, through study of the history, cultures, and traditional values of African people, we seek to have and cultivate an African way of looking at things.

The main purposes of the HARAMBEE FLAME are to stimulate and inform. We list "stimulate" first because, more than anything else, we want our readers to be moved to question their/your own ideas, lives, and the circumstances in which we live and to challenge those things that must be challenged in order for us to move from a condition of mental and spiritual servitude and physical dependence upon Caucasian institutions to a state of collective self-determination. Toward this purpose, we present commentaries, poems, etc. These do not necessarily represent the official positions of the Harambee Afrikan Cultural Organization.

The HARAMBEE FLAME provides information because wise people want to know what's going on and because certain kinds of information can stimulate the mind, inspire people to want to act, and influence them to pursue proper understanding so that the actions they take will be as effective as possible. The main vehicle we use to provide information is our "From Other Sources" feature in which we make an effort to provide news about the problems we African people are confronted by and the steps we are taking to resolve them. In this feature, we try to provide coverage of the activities of African people and developments affecting us in the U.S., the nations of Africa, and elsewhere. "Community News" is another vehicle.

We encourage you to submit your reports, essays, poems, etc. Please enclose stamped, self-addressed return envelope.

From Other Sources

California Court Rules Africans Cannot Sue Federal Government On Grounds of Slavery, Etc.

"On Dec. 4, the 9th Circuit Court of Appeals in San Francisco ruled that Blacks cannot sue the federal government for damages or an apology for slavery and racial discrimination.

"Seven Black plaintiffs had sought more than $100 million in damages, or reparations, for the U.S. government's enslavement of their ancestors...

"In so ruling, the circuit court has upheld a lower court's decision that redress for slavery must come from Congress, not from the court.

"The ruling, in essence, means that similar lawsuits file in the 9th circuit's jurisdiction(Washington State, Oregon, Idaho, Montana, Nevada, California and Arizona) will automatically be dismissed unless the U.S. Supreme Court intervenes, said Michael Harris, a staff attorney for the Lawyers' Committee for Civil Rights(LCCR) of the San Francisco Bay Area...

"The LCCR had argued that the Constitution's 13th Amendment, which abolished slavery, authorizes federal courts to intervene when congressional action perpetuates slavery's effects, such as the stiff federal mandatory minimum sentencing cocaine guidelines that disproportionately punishes poor, Black crack users, and the move by Congress to repeal affirmative action and welfare..."

"The many individuals and groups who continue to seek recourse through the courts and Congress are, in fact, meeting the legal requirement which is necessary under international law to give legitimacy to Blacks seeking to go outside the U.S. government to have their grievances heard by an international forum...said Raushana Karriem, ambassador of the Lost-Found Nation of Islam based in Atlanta..."

-from "CA. Courts Rule Against Reparations Suit For Slav-

ery," pages 3 and 8, Jan. 3 THE FINAL CALL(Chicago, IL.)

Subcontracting: Another Tool In The Assault On Laborers

"Subcontracting is the practice whereby a firm contracts the production of certain goods or the provision of specific services to outside suppliers; it creates pyramidal structures in which large corporations are on top, contractors are in the middle and workers are at the bottom. The process itself is not new, but it is now being implemented to systematically reduce labor costs in all sectors of the economy. Joel Ochoa, director of the Southeast division of the California Immigrant Workers Association, argues that subcontracting has been one of the main factors allowing companies to turn formerly permanent, well-paid jobs into temporary, low-wage, no-benefits 'casual' jobs...

"People of color, and immigrant communities in particular, bear the brunt of these changes...

"For janitors, the contrast between workforce and workplace could not be greater. Most janitors are Latina or African American women, toiling at night in the skyscrapers that house some of the most powerful corporations in America. Some make in a month what executives receive in an hour. To fight this inequality, Justice for Janitors[a campaign of the Service Employees International Union] has adopted 'in-your-face' tactics that both disrupt the normal flow of business and raise public pressure on the corporations to deal directly with the union instead of hiding behind the contractors. The union has blocked freeways and bridges, conducted guerrilla theater in front of corporate offices, disrupted share-holders' and city hall meetings, picketed the homes of corporate executives and taken over their offices...

"Clothing production networks span the globe, from East Asia to Central America and the Caribbean, linking manufacturers with designers. But because they have quicker turnaround times and can put together a low-wage workforce made up almost exclusively of women of color, sweatshops

in the U.S. have multiplied. According to the Department of Labor, about one million workers are employed in the garment industry, most of them in the 22,000 sweatshops that have contracts [with] more than 1,000 manufacturers...

"AIWA[Asian Immigrant Women Advocates] tries...to connect the top and bottom layers of the subcontracting pyramid by forcing manufacturers, retailers and designers to admit responsibility for the situation of those who produce their goods. The group [does] so by using a complementary strategy that combines educating and organizing the garment workers themselves with creating public pressure through a mix of rallies, pickets, and media blitzes that culminate in boycott campaigns...

-from "Toppling The Pyramid: Organizing Against Subcontracting," pages 20-28, Jan./Feb. THIRD FORCE(Springfield, MA.)

Behind-the-Scenes U.S. Haitian Policy

"...Aristide has consistently demanded that the U.S. and U.N. forces disarm the populace of the thousands of automatic weapons that former Haitian leader Cedras and police chief Francois distributed to their supporters before fleeing Haiti. The U.S. military has been ineffective in tracking down the guns though it confiscated 160,000 pages of dossiers and documents from different FRAPH offices and military headquarters. When attorneys representing Aristide asked for the documents, the State Department refused, claiming endangerment of too many people now living in Haiti...

"The U.S. has been pressuring Aristide to privatize key parts of the economy. In November, Clinton dispatched Vice-President Al Gore to Haiti to warn the Aristide government that a $1.2 billion International Monetary Fund loan would not be approved unless Haiti sold off its state-owned enterprises to private interests. Then, over Thanksgiving, Clinton's national security advisor, Anthony Lake, told Aristide he must privatize if he wants to receive $4.5 million in U.S. funds withheld since October. Aristide, who has steadily resisted these ultimatums, has

told the U.S. he wants the Haitian Parliament to vote on the privatization measure, and would support it on the condition that a new tax system is introduced taxing the rich. With this measure he would hope to replace the 50 percent of the budget now provided by international loans...

In August, Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff John Shalikashvili met with Aristide and allegedly told him the U.S. would not accept [Rene] Preval as the next president. Trained as an agronomist, Preval is a strong supporter of land reform, and hence a direct threat to the elites who have run Haiti for centuries. One American government after another has supported military dictatorships that have driven Haitian peasants away from their land and into the slums of Port-au-Prince...

"Meanwhile, information is coming to light that U.S. Special Forces have been undermining Aristide's presidency all along. During the invasion of Haiti, U.S. troops supported and protected FRAPH, the terrorist arm of the police and other extremist organizations. A newsletter claiming to be the official publication of the Special Forces Underground describes how U.S. Special Forces informed FRAPH members about the plans and timetables for weapons confiscation and told them how to 'disappear their functional firearms while keeping broken and otherwise useless weapons available to sell during the weapons buy-back program'. Village Voice, Dec. 5, 1995. The article also alleged that the Green Berets established an escape route to the Dominican Republic for ex-FRAPH members under the threat of arrest..."

-from "The Case For Haiti's President," page 2, Jan. NEBRASKA REPORT(Lincoln, NE.)

On The Turmoil In Nigeria

"In Nigeria, things have been falling apart for most of its nearly 36 years of independence from direct British rule. It is a complex country with a complex past, a cauldron of socio-political and economic forces: First, there is

its continued dependence on foreign companies, such as Royal Dutch Shell, an oil industry giant at the heart of strife with the Ogoni, a small ethnic group; thend there is a military that seems trained to throw up barricades to democracy at every turn...

"Dangerously stirring the pot in this latest episode has been Gen. Abacha...For Abacha, allegations range from torturing pro-democracy forces to closing publications and out-lawing unions to leading a corrupt band of officials accused of getting rich by raiding the public coffers.

"In the meantime, Nigeria's economy and its quality of life have taken a nose-dive. Because of its oil, it has annual revenues of $10billion, but Nigeria's per capita income was about $300 for 1994, down from more than $1,000 during the 1970s and 1980s. Abacha opponents say that is a result of his government's thievery; his supporters say it is Nigeria's role in aiding neighbors that is draining the economy...

"Ken Saro-Wiwa had gained international attention in his relentless fight for the Ogoni, who live in Nigeria's oil-rich southern states and charge that the oil industry, specifically Royal Dutch Shell, was destroying Ogoni land and water--with the military government's blessing. There were violent clashes between the Ogoni and Nigerian troops, and Shell's pipelines were sabotaged. Then, at a rally in May 1994, four Ogoni leaders were killed and the Abacha government alleged it was the work of Saro-Wiwa, leader of the Movement for the Survival of the Ogoni People. Human rights groups insisted the nine anti-government activists were being framed for the killings and pleaded that the men's lives be spared.

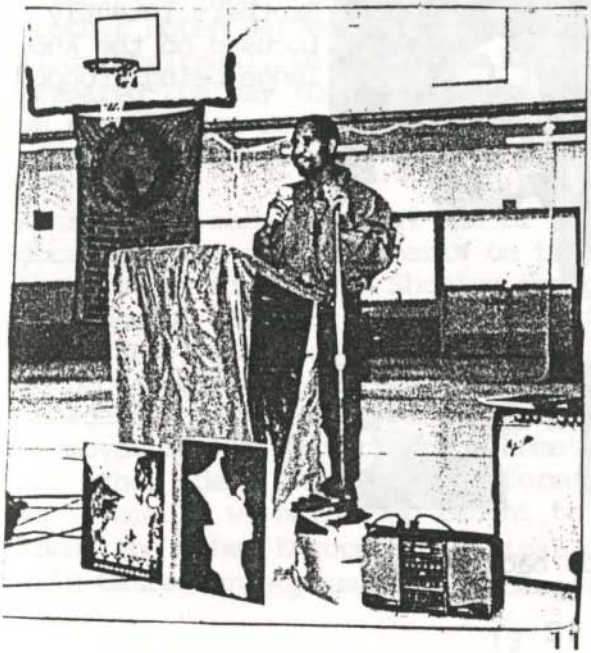
"After a secret, military tribunal that Saro-Wiwa supporters denounced as a farce, Abacha shocked the world: Two days after a military council upheld the murder convictions, Saro-Wiwa and his colleagues were marched to their deaths in Port Harcourt, a southern oil port...

"Probably more than anything else, it was the executions that gave the world the jolt needed to push Nigeria's crisis

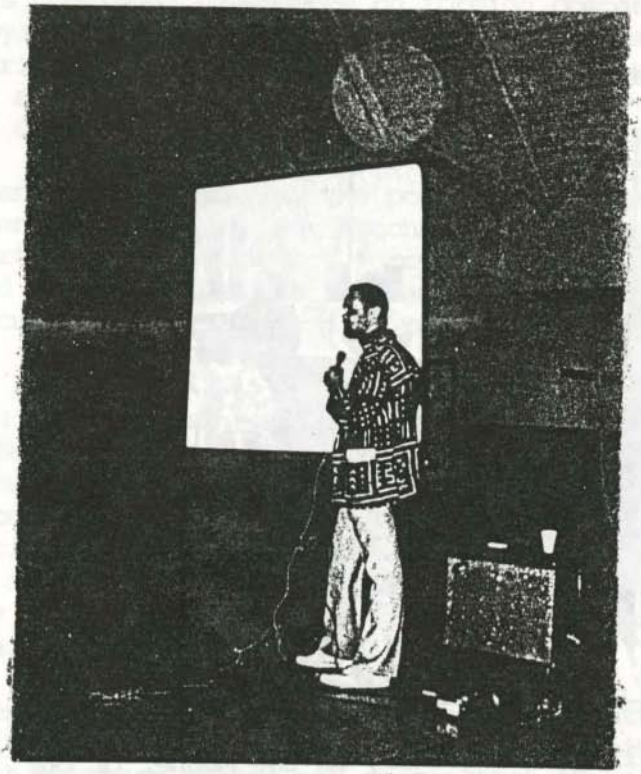
(Cont. on page 15)

"Ancient Egyptian History: Stolen From Afrika"
Nebraska State Prison Lincoln January 6 1996

Brother Ahmose, calling us together, in the manner of our ancestors



Our Alaga(Chairman), delivering his welcoming remarks to members and guests



Ashra Kwesi doing his slide presentation

Brothers intently focused on the knowledge being dropped

-More on inside back cover-

Community News

On Jan. 6th., we hosted a special program entitled "Ancient Egyptian History: Stolen From Afrika," which featured guest speaker, Ashra Kwesi. Brother Kwesi, who lives in Los Angeles, has spent several years studying under the great scholar/elder, Yosef ben-Jochannan; doing research in Africa, the U.S., and Europe onAfrican and European history; and has been conducting tours of Egypt for African people from the U.S. to enable them to see for themselves the material evidence(writings and pictures on stone, ancient buildings and carvings, etc.) that the people who designed and built the pyramids, developed geometry and other sciences, populated and ruled Kemet("Egypt"), etc. were Africans. His visit to the prison, which had originally been planned for September, was made possible, in part, by a grant from the Nebraska Humanities Council and by the assistance of one of our volunteers, Marquita Ali.

The program, which began at 1:00, was started with a call to assemble by drummer Jama Kenyatta Ahmose. This was followed by the libation ceremony conducted by Mondo and our special guest, Ashra Kwesi. Ken Loc(Kenny Walker) led us in the recitation of our organization creed. And an assortment of our members called out the nguzo sabo(seven principles) and received response from the whole body. Brother Hotep served as master of ceremonies. Hamza, our Alaga(Chairman), welcomed the members and guests and prepared the way for Ashra's presentation by delivering up some rhymes dealing with the impact of Western religions on African mentality.

Ashra Kwesi made powerful use of slides as visual documentation of his remarks on the theft from Africa of the history of Kemet. Showing the pyramids, temples, etc., he spoke of the many achievements of Kemet; and showing sculptures, other carvings, wall paintings, and so forth, he provided clear confirmation of the African idenity of pharoahs, queens, and Kemetic people generally. From there, he moved to the matter of how Kemetic philosophies, science, and other ideas and practices formed the basis of many achievements we have been taught to associate with Greece, Rome, and other European civilizations. Lastly, he dealt with Caucasian-supremacist ideology(racism) and how this

drove Europeans/Caucasians to use every means available to "remove" "Egypt" from the African continent.

Throughout his presentation, Kwesi made most effective use of visual documentation, including pages of historical and other texts, as well as architecture and other art, often employing visual comparisons, especially when addressing the matter of European/Caucasian borrowings, adaptations, and thefts of Kemetic ideas and forms. At times, these visual comparisons were down-right shocking in their validation of the brother's words. On occasion, Ashra used humor to make a point. The presentation, which lasted for nearly an hour and a half, never let up in its vitality. At its conclusion, we all rose to our feet, paying tribute to a brother who had clearly done his "homework" and had just as clearly given us some very abundant and nourishing food for thought. Afterward, there was a brief question-and-response session.

The final portion of the program was a performance by the drummer, Brother Ahmose, who, after playing a couple of exciting pieces on the conga, pulled a variety of percussion instruments from his bag and distributed them among us. Employing both words and beats, he involved us in a veritable trip to the Motherland, as he led us in the call-and-response musical traditions of our ancestors. It became a kind of revivial, with Jama Kenyatta Ahmose and the rest of us feeding off the colletive energy.

We thank Brother Kwesi, Brother Ahmose, Sister Marquita, et al. And we thank Brother "Zip" for taking photos of the event.

Announcements

Kemet Nu Productions presents videotapes on the theft of Afrikan history and spiritual concepts, Judaism and Christianity, the stolen religions from Afrika, the cultural destruction of Afrikan fashions by Ashra Kwesi and Merira Kwesi. These video tapes include slide-presentations, on-site lectures, etc. In addition to the video tapes, a book, AFRIKAN BUILDERS OF CIVILIZATION, is available from Kemet Nu Productions. For ordering information, write to: Kemet Nu Productions; 3870 Crenshaw Blvd.; Suite 104-424; Los Angeles, CA; 90008. Or call (213) 938-8031. Ashra Kwesi is also available for lectures.

The first annual National Black History Festival will be held on February 24, 1996 at Morgan University(Hill Field House) from noon to 9:00 p.m. Admission is $5.00 in advance for adults; $2.00 for children ages 7-12 and free for children under three. The event is sponsored by the Black/African Arts & Culture Promotions Organization USA Inc., Rev. Ben Chavis, the National African-American Leadership Summit & Morgan State University Students Association. For more information contact Bro. Christopher at (410) 992-9129 or Lew Andrews at (410) 381-6245.

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From Other Sources(Cont.)

onto the world stage. The United States has recalled its ambassador and has stopped the sale of military weapons to the country. President Clinton also instructed the U.N. ambassador to seek condemnation of Nigeria, one of the 10 rotating members of its Security Council.

"At least seven other countries have recalled their ambassadors. Africa's leading statesman, South African President Nelso Mandela, abandoned his quiet diplomacy efforts with Nigeria and called for its expulsion from the British Commonwealth. He urged the United States and Britain, Nigeria's major oil customers, to impose oil embargoes. Though the United States has imposed several sanctions, such as restrictions on visas, it has stopped short of an embargo...from Feb. EMERGE(Washington, D.C.)

Back In Time

What happened to Black identity under the American impact were twin processes: its dis-Africanisation, on one side, and its racialisation on the other...

The dis-Africanisation of the imported captives took a variety of forms. There was first the dis-Africanisation of personal identity for each individual. It was decided by the masters that the slaves should not carry the names they had borne in their own cultures---all that wealth of African names drawn from Yoruba, Mandinka, Ewe, Wolof and other African cultures. Again, as a group, Black Americans became the only ethnic group in the United States whose personal names almost never give a clue about their cultural of geographical ancestry. Slavery fsorced them to adopt Anglo-Saaxon, Hebraic or related Western names...

But there is also the dis-Africanisation of the collective identity of the imported captives. The ethno-cultural names from Africa(Yoruba, Mandinka, and the like) were forced out of existence relatively rapidly. The slaves ceased to be called "Africans" or anything related to their geographical ancestry, and rapidly became "niggers" or "negroes."

This was accompanied by the dis-Africanisation of collective pride...The captives were gradually taught to believe that being a slave was almost a form of deliverance away from the savagery and primitiveness of their ancestral homes...

But as these linguistic, religious and other forms of dis-Africanisation were taking place, a parallel process was also under way: the racialisation of the Afro-American identity...The white man had decided that the most important aspect of their identity was their black skin and the Afro-Americans accepted that fate for generations...

...the "negro" was by definition "Black." Over time he was forced to protect and to value precisely that racial identity imposed upon him by his oppressor.

Source: THE AFRICANS by Ali A. Mazrui

Folks feeling the spirit, as Jama Kenyatta Ahmose leads on in some call-and-response